



2021/01/13

NEWSLETTER I FOR 2021

*Knowing is not enough. We must apply.
Wishing is not enough. We must do.
~ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe ~*

FROM YOUR COMMITTEE

In many ways 2020 was a difficult year for us all. We had to face lockdowns, and with that a whole lot less training, the lack of shows hosted by Federation clubs, and a whole lot of other changes. Luckily we could still host a few events, and those were a huge success!

As a committee we look forward to what we hope to be a full (or at least fuller) year of training, although that has already kicked off with the wrong foot. Once the opportunity arise to open the club again, we hope to go full steam ahead, with a dedicated team of trainers and a committed club, training dogs to their full potential!

However, for now, as you would have noticed from the club group chats, we are prohibited from training, and that for the whole club's safety. We hope to see you all again at the soonest, all healthy and ready for a new year!

SPECIAL DATES

Michaela celebrated her birthday on 03 January 2021. We would like to wish you all the best for the year ahead!

The Johannesburg Show that was planned for January 2021 has unfortunately been canceled. The National show has also been postponed, the Federation is currently looking at a possible date in September. We will keep you all informed of any important changes

082 301 7311



secretary@thecradlegsclub.co.za



www.thecradlegsclub.co.za



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LOOKING AT THE TRAINING SIDE OF THINGS

a message from Bruce and Michaela

Training takes place at all times and not only on the training field. Take what you learn and implement daily, 5 minutes a day is better than none. All it takes is baby steps. Hereby a few tips that may come in handy:

- 1. Provide a Daily Outlet for Your Dog's Energy** This can include walks, slow bike rides, and other adventures.
- 2. Follow Through on Commands:** Many dog owners will issue a command to their dog, then abandon the effort when the dog doesn't comply. That doesn't reinforce positive behaviour, and it only reinforces that you should be ignored. Giving a simple command and following it through helps put gravity to each command. Be careful not to overuse commands, as you will be required to follow through on each one. That can mean a lot of time and patience when new commands are being trained.
- 3. Don't Reward Bad Behaviours:** Bad behaviours need to be rooted out when the dog is young, so they do not escalate when the dog reaches maturity. The best route is to set ground rules for the life of the dog, not just for puppy stages.
- 4. Don't Blame the Dog:** Dog's love to please humans, but they simply do not have our level of intellect. It's up to each and every dog owner to show their canine how to operate in a human world. That means that if a dog has a bad quirk, it's up to the owner to find a way to help them through that quirk or to re-direct that quirk to a positive experience. For example, if a dog loves to chew, getting them the proper toys to chew may go a long way.
- 5. Stop Interacting When They Misbehave:** If a dog is pulling on a leash, the best way to stop them from doing that is to stop moving. That means they will have to wait patiently to move again. Simply put, if there is tension on the leash, stop moving. In addition, if they are jumping up on people, have the person turn their body away from the dog. The best way to train good behaviour is sometimes to not reward bad behaviour.
- 6. Adapt (Because They Will!):** German Shepherds are smart dogs and will adapt over time. They may learn that barking when about to be fed speeds things up. If they start doing bad things, again, the best thing to do is to not reward their bad behaviour. Instead, wait until the barking stops, and then you can set down the food. Figuring out your dog's odd quirks can help you in figuring out how to better train your dog.

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FINANCES AND ADMIN

from Dirk

It is indeed that time of the year again. Believe it or not, a whole year has flown past since you last filled out those boring membership forms, and that time has already come again!

Attached to this letter you will find the 2021 club membership forms. For those that joined the club during the last term of 2020, we will use the previous forms. All other members are requested to please complete these forms and return them to info@thecradlegsclub.co.za as soon as possible, in order for us to get the information submitted to the Federation.

The committee has decided to waive training fees for January 2021. However, all the annual membership fees that were due in January, will still be invoiced during this month. We will allow members a grace period to pay for these up to end of February, but would like to urge you all to get them paid as soon as possible. These fees goes mainly to new training equipment for the club as training equipment gets old and worn. A part of it also gets paid to the Federation, and these fees are due soon!

Olympic Professional dog food is still available from the club, even though we are not currently training. Remember to contact Dirk well in advance if you would require food.

SOMETHING INTERESTING

There are many reasons why German Shepherds stand in the front rank of canine royalty, but experts say their defining attribute is character: loyalty, courage, confidence, the ability to learn commands for many tasks, and the willingness to put their life on the line in defense of loved ones.

German Shepherds are members of the Herding Group. So, if you own this breed, you're no stranger to a nose nudging you. Whether it's a nose in the back, a nose on your leg, or even a nose in your face, your dog is just doing what comes naturally. Although this breed isn't often used to herd anymore, that herding heritage remains. So, along with the herding traits of independent thinking and intelligence, it's perfectly normal for your GSD to herd human family members. Your dog might also show "following ahead" behavior – walking in front of you while looking back to ensure you're walking in the right direction.

~ THE END (FOR NOW) ~

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